

Dr. Joseph Spinale, a cardiologist and president of the Kent HeartSafe Foundation, announced today that the Foundation has established a grant program to fund the purchase of automatic external defibrillators (AEDs). The “Jumpstart a Heart” program’s goal is to place more AEDs in public locations throughout the community.

Spinale noted that early defibrillation with an AED and initiation of CPR are critical to victims’ survival. “One of the foundation’s main goals is to raise the area’s survival rate for cardiac arrest,” he said. “We know one of the best ways to do this is to train more of our citizens to perform CPR and use an AED. Our hope is that AEDs will one day become as common as a fire extinguisher in public places.”

“Jumpstart a Heart is another component of our multi-faceted approach to helping us ensure that our citizens will survive a medical crisis,” said Mayor Scott Avedisian, who helped to establish the Foundation and serves on its board.

Nonprofit organizations are encouraged to apply and should serve populations where groups of at least 50 gather. Target organizations include elementary, middle and high schools, post-secondary schools, churches, senior centers, camps and community organizations, Spinale said. The grant recipient will receive one AED, training, first-year maintenance and service.

Applications will be reviewed by Kent HeartSafe Board of Trustees. Selected grant award recipients, as well as all applicants, will be notified 45 days following the most recent application deadline. Organizations that qualify but were not selected will be considered at the next application period as well. The deadline to submit applications is March 4.

To apply, please send a one-page letter explaining the need for the equipment, where it will be located and the population to be served. The letter should be sent to the Kent HeartSafe Foundation, Warwick City Hall, 3275 Post Road, Warwick, 02886. For more information, send email to aed@kentheartsafe.org or log onto the Foundation’s website: www.kentheartsafe.org

The Foundation’s first AED donation, in cooperation with the Cardiac Science Corporation, was to the Warwick Public Library on Sandy Lane.

The Foundation was established in 2006, with a mission of promoting public awareness, AED registry and purchasing, advocacy and fundraising. Establishing a Heart Safe Foundation was one of the recommendations made by the Warwick Heart Safe Task Force, which Avedisian created in the fall of 2005 to review and assess the community’s current response to SCA; the availability of CPR trained personnel within Warwick; current AED availability and future need; implementation of future Department of Health “Heart Safe Community” criteria and to make recommendations for community training in CPR/AED use and funding of AED programs.

Contact: Dr. Joseph Spinale, 401-737-7313